

**STWEING IN BETRAYAL AND DECEIT: INTERNET INFIDELITY IN INDIAN
CONTEXT**

By

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It has been alleged that social pathologies are beginning to surface in cyberspace. The present study examined whether attribution-making process serve as a mechanism for a partner's extradyadic involvement with some else through internet. Through self-administered survey questionnaire comprising of 14,987 respondents from 15 states and Union territories in India, we investigated the reasons behind people's involvement in Internet Infidelity.

Study 1 attempted to redress the question by comparing attributions, perception and attitude towards online acts of infidelity of the two set of participants: Perpetrators and Non Perpetrators of Online Infidelity. Predictor variables were entered into Logistic Regression with presence of age, sexual orientation, gender, education, relationship status, family type, occupation as the dependent variable. A factor analysis was carried out that yielded two components: Dispositional factors (which included 3 sub- factors: (a.) Strong Moral Values, (b.) Religious Principles, (c.) Not wanting to cheat on one's partner) and Situational factors (which also included 3 sub-factors: (a.) Fear of being caught, (b.) Lack of knowledge, (c.) Internet Inaccessibility).

Study 2 investigates the reasons of perpetrators (Married and In a committed relationship) behind involvement in Internet Infidelity. Findings demonstrated significantly different reasons behind involvement in extradyadic online relationship between respondents who are Married (Emotional Support, Frustration, Boredom) and In a Relationship (Peer Pressure, Desire to Explore). The potential implication of cyberspace addiction and infidelity on intimate partner violence (physical and psychological abuse), divorce, marital discord, mental health related issues and neglect of best parenting practices is also presented.

Key words: **Internet Infidelity, Attribution, Dispositional factors, Situational factors**